GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2105
ANSWERED ON:06.05.2016
Capping of Channels
Nayak Shri B.V.

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of TV channels being aired in the country is more than the actual requirement of people, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government has asked the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to study about capping the number of channels in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof along with the recommendations made by the TRAI in this regard and the steps taken by the Government thereon;

(d) whether the Government proposes to amend the uplinking and downlinking policy in order to check incessant increase in the number of news channels in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING {COL RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (Retd.)}

(a) to (e): A reference was made by this Ministry to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on 8.10.2009 to examine, among other things, whether there is a case for putting a cap on the total number of permissions for channels keeping in view the available spectrum and transponder capacities as well as technological developments; financial viability of the organizations seeking permissions; experience of organization in related sector; and experience and expertise of the promoters of the organization in related fields.

TRAI vide their recommendations dated 22nd July, 2010 stated that no cap be placed on the number of satellite broadcasting channels to be permitted to be Downlinked for viewing in India or to be uplinked from India. Further, TRAI recommended measures to ensure that only serious players were encouraged. Accordingly, TRAI recommended higher networth criteria for applicant companies desirous of operating News as well as Non-News TV channels. They also recommended to introduce experience clause for top executives of such broadcaster companies. The complete Recommendations of TRAI dated 22.7.2010 are available on their website i.e. http://trai.gov.in.

The recommendations were examined in the Ministry and after much deliberations, were accepted. Accordingly, the Uplinking and Downlinking Guidelines were amended with the approval of Cabinet after carrying out due consultation with other Ministries/ Departments. Revised Uplinking and Downlinking Guidelines were notified on 5.12.2011 and are available on the website of Ministry i.e. www.mib.nic.in.
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